## Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims of the application.

## **Listing of Claims:**

- 1. (Original) A polymer composition comprising multistage polymer particles; wherein each of said multistage polymer particles comprises:
  - a) a first polymer comprising:
  - i) a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and
- ii) at least one pendant absorbing group selected from the group consisting of phosphorus acid groups, phosphorus acid full-ester groups, polyacid sidechain groups, and mixtures thereof,

wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; and

b) a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C, wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said at least one pendant absorbing group;

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20.

- 2. (Original) A composite particle comprising:
  - a) an inorganic particle having a surface; and
- b) a plurality of multistage polymer particles attached to said surface of said inorganic particle, each of said multistage polymer particles comprising:
- i) a first polymer comprising: a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and at least one pendant absorbing group selected from the group consisting of phosphorus acid groups, phosphorus acid full-ester groups, polyacid sidechain groups, and mixtures thereof, wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; and
- ii) a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C, wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said at least one pendant absorbing group;

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20.

- 3. (Original) An aqueous composition, useful for preparing a dried coating, comprising:
  - a) a composite particle comprising:
  - i) an inorganic particle having a surface; and
- ii) a plurality of multistage polymer particles absorbed on said surface of said inorganic particle, each of said multistage polymer particles comprising: a first polymer comprising: a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and at least one pendant absorbing group selected from the group consisting of phosphorus acid groups, phosphorus acid full-ester groups, polyacid sidechain groups, and mixtures thereof, wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; and

a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said at least one pendant absorbing group;

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20; and

- b) a binder.
- 4. (Original) The aqueous composition according to claim 3 having a volatile organic compound level of less than 50 gram per liter of said aqueous composition.
- 5. (Original) A multistage polymer particle comprising:
  - a) a first polymer comprising:
  - i) a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and
  - ii) at least one complementary functional group,

wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 120°C; and

b) a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C, wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said at least one complementary functional group;

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20.

- 6. (Original) A covalently bonded composite particle comprising:
  - a) a pigment particle;
- b) a first plurality of reacted coupling agents, such that each one of said reacted coupling agents forms a first covalent bond with said pigment particle; and
- c) a second plurality of multistage polymer particles, each of said multistage polymer particles comprising:
  - i) a first polymer comprising:
- a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and a complementary functional group reacted to form a second covalent bond with a corresponding one of said first plurality of reacted coupling agents; wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 120°C; and
- ii) a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said reacted complementary functional group; and

  wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20.

- 7. (Original) An aqueous composition, useful for preparing a dried coating, comprising:
  - a) a covalently bonded composite particle comprising:
  - i) a pigment particle;
- ii) a first plurality of reacted coupling agents, such that each one of said reacted coupling agents forms a first covalent bond to said pigment particle; and

iii) a second plurality of multistage polymer particles, each of said multistage polymer particles comprising:

a first polymer comprising a polymerized unit of a multiethylenically unsaturated monomer, and a complementary functional group reacted to form a second covalent bond with a corresponding one of said first plurality of reacted coupling agents; wherein said first polymer has a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 120°C; and a second polymer having a glass transition temperature in the range of from -60°C to 35°C; wherein said second polymer is substantially free of said reacted complementary functional group;

wherein the average weight ratio of said first polymer to said second polymer is in the range of from 1:2 to 1:20; and

- b) a binder.
- 8. (Original) The aqueous composition according to claim 7 having a volatile organic compound level of less than 50 gram per liter of said aqueous composition.
- 9. (Canceled).
- 10. (Original) A composite particle comprising:
  - a) an inorganic particle having a surface; and
- b) a plurality of polymer particles absorbed on said surface of said inorganic particle, each of said polymer particles having a pendant phosphorus acid full-ester group.